

Hoip Keene

No. XL.

MODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT,

AUTHOR OF "VELASCO, A TRAGEDY," &c.



THE
DAY AFTER THE WEDDING.

A Farce

IN ONE ACT.

BY MRS. CHARLES KEMBLE.

**WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS, COS-
TUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, &c.**



NEW-YORK:

WM. TAYLOR & CO., 18 Ann-Street.

BALTIMORE, MD.:

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Don't know
L. K.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.


THIS pleasant little interlude, which is still very frequently played, was first produced at Covent Garden Theatre in 1808. The author, Mrs. Charles Kemble, was born at Vienna, Jan. 17th, 1774, and was the daughter of George Louis De Camp, a musician of considerable eminence. He died at the premature age of thirty, leaving her the eldest of six children, and then only twelve years old. She had not at this time even learned to read English, but resolved to make up by industry the defects of her education. She became popular as an actress and a singer at Drury Lane; and at length produced a comedy for her own benefit, called "First Faults," which evinced no ordinary talent. In 1806 she married Mr. Charles Kemble, and made her debut on the boards of Covent Garden, where "The Day After the Wedding, or a Wife's First Lesson," was soon afterwards produced. She died a few years since.

This interlude, without many broad comic touches, has those qualities which will long insure it a place upon the stage. It has point, vivacity, and wit—is cleverly constructed, and never violates good taste. It is creditable both to the dramatic and literary skill of Mrs. Kemble.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Park Theatre, 1845.

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| <i>Colonel Freelove</i> | - - - - - | Mr. G. Barrett. |
| <i>Lord Rivers</i> | - - - - - | " Crocker. |
| <i>James</i> | - - - - - | " Povey. |
| <i>Groom</i> | - - - - - | " Gallot. |
| <i>Lady Elizabeth</i> | - - - - - | Mrs. Bland. |
| <i>Mrs. Davies</i> | - - - - - | Mrs. Vernon. |

 *The Costumes, being those of the present day, will vary according to the tastes of the actors.*

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*; L. C., *Left of Centre*.

N.B. Passages marked with Inverted Commas, are usually omitted in the representation.

THE
DAY AFTER THE WEDDING.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Villa belonging to Colonel Freelove. The Stage represents a lady's dressing-room, tastefully furnished with sofa, footstools, cheffioniers, &c., &c., books, papers, vases, &c., &c., on the chimney-piece; a guitar hung up; a dressing-table, on which is a hand-bell; on the left hand a flute, music-desk, a small drawing-table, with port-folio, &c., &c., &c.; tambour-frame on the sofa.*

JAMES and MRS. DAVIES *discovered in the act of putting the things to rights.*

James. [*Looking at his watch.*] Bless my soul! eleven o'clock! and not stirring yet!

Mrs. D. Consider, nights are short at this fine season of the year: remember, you were young once yourself.

James. Ay, and this happy wedding has made me young again. Kiss me, my old mate! [*Kisses her.*] Well, it was a fine sight; the lasses so gay, and the lads so smart;—then the volunteers drawn out, and the parson and the clerk!—

Mrs. D. Lord, it's an awful thing to be married!

James. Many people find it so.

Mrs. D. I wish my dear young master may not; but I think the lady has a bit of a spirit of her own:—did you mind how she treated that poor waiting-woman she brought with her from town! The Lord forgive me, but I thought she would have slapped her face!

James. Pho ! nonsense !—she is a lively little thing.

Mrs. D. She is, indeed : and, in my mind, my master will have a lively time with her—he has desired I will assist in dressing her—and the very thought of it puts me into a twitter from head to foot. Oh, here comes my master and his new brother-in-law, Lord Rivers.

Enter COLONEL FREELOVE and LORD RIVERS.

Col. Good day, good day to you, my worthy friends.

Mrs. D. The same to you, sir, and a great many of them. You rested well, I hope, last night ?

James. Hush, you silly woman !

Mrs. D. The lady found everything to her satisfaction, I hope ?

James. Don't ask impertinent questions.

Col. Thank you, thank you—you were very busy last night. You over-worked yourselves, I'm afraid.

James. Ah, sir, had it been twenty times as much, we should have gone through it with pleasure, for so good a master.

Col. In the midst of my own happiness, I have not been unmindful of yours. This paper insures you ease for the remainder of your days. [*Gives a paper.*]

James. Ah, sir, the only way to insure our ease, will be to let us die in your service.

Col. These honest people, my lord, are old friends ; I am indebted to their kind offices from the very hour of my birth.

Mrs. D. Ay, sir ;—I was his nurse ; who would believe, to see him such a fine well-grown gentleman, that I used to dandle him in my arms ?—Ay, ay, for all you look so, I did.

James. Yes, and the day he was breeched—do you remember how unkindly he took to them ? Pretty tricks you played us, ha ! ha ! ha ! I shall never forget it.

Col. There, there—go, my good friends, and be sure you don't fatigue yourselves.

James and Mrs. D. Thank you : health, happiness, and a long life to your honour ! [*Exeunt, L.*]

Lord R. Well, Harry :—here you are, arrived at the summit of all earthly bliss !—eh ?—

Col. I am, indeed. Surrounded by faithful servants ;

enjoying a princely fortune ; possessing an amiable, beautiful, and accomplished wife—

Lord R. You hope to glide along the stream of life, unobstructed by the shoals of misfortune, or the quicksands of disappointment :—your chance for happiness is as good as any man's—married man's, I mean. My sister possesses most valuable qualities—but your marriage followed so close upon your declaration, that you had not leisure to study Elizabeth's temper ; which, I fear, you will find impatient of restraint, quick, irritable—why, you don't seem moved !

Col. I believe your picture is overcharged : brothers are not apt to flatter.

Lord R. Nor lovers to discern the imperfections of their mistresses.—She'll soon give you a taste of her quality :—her behaviour to her maid, yesterday, might have convinced you, I think, that she can look a little black.

Col. It did not escape me ;—every man must hazard much in the choice of a wife ; but if, in this lottery of wedlock, he gains beauty, accomplishments, principles, and a good heart, he must indeed be ungrateful if he arraign his fortune.

Lord R. Temper, temper, my good fellow—

Col. May be amended. Lady Elizabeth has been spoiled in her childhood—she is now but eighteen—she is ingenuous, and has sensibility. With mild and affectionate treatment, such a creature may be moulded into anything.

Lord R. Then you must re-educate her.

Col. I propose to do so. Here, I shall have neither dissipation to encounter, bad example to combat—

Lord R. Nor female counsels to counteract.

Col. You judge the sex too harshly ;—they are charming creatures !

Lord R. But they may be mended.

Col. Do but promise to second my project, and I'll undertake to make your sister tractable.

Lord R. Accomplish that, and I'll acknowledge you the prince of shrew-tamers.

Col. Hush ! she's here—I have a few calls to make ; accompany me, and I will tell you my plans as we walk along.

Enter LADY ELIZABETH in a morning-dress, R.

Lady E. Good morning, brother.—Harry—

[Holds out her hand to him.]

Col. We were speaking of you, Bess. Your brother has been pronouncing a flaming panegyric upon you—what's the matter? you seem chagrined.

Lady E. You cannot imagine how much I am vexed; such a misfortune has happened to me!

Col. You alarm me, Bess.

Lady E. I have no waiting-woman.

Lord R. What a calamity!

Lady E. Last night, in a little pet, I just desired Maria to go about her business; and do you know, she has had the sauciness to obey me?

Col. Could she do better than obey you, Bess?

Lady E. Oh, but I did not mean it, you know. I was very sorry for what I said, last night; and when I sent for her this morning, she was gone. I don't much care about it; for really she was such a dawdle!

Lord R. Why, she was but just come to you; you turned away your former woman, only the day before yesterday.

Lady E. Oh, yes; I could not bear her, she was so pert.

Col. I am afraid you will not find it easy to suit yourself. Come, Rivers: good bye, Bess.

Lady E. What, are you going out already?

Lord R. We have a few calls to make.

Lady E. Why, what visits can you have to pay, when you are but so lately arrived? By-the-bye, how shall I get dressed?

Col. Oh, there will be no great difficulty in that. Ladies have so much consideration for their waiting-women now-a-days, that they even dispense with their petticoats, to diminish the labours of the toilette—don't make yourself uneasy, my love; my housekeeper was waiting-woman to my mother many years; I have already desired her to attend your commands—I'll send Mrs. Davies to you. Good bye, Bess.

Lady E. Well, if you must go—but don't be absent long, now, for I hate to be alone.

[*Exeunt the Colonel and Lord Rivers, &c.*]

Let me see; what dress shall I wear? my blue tunic? no, no: my pretty white crape with the peach-blossom trimming. Harry has never seen that, and he'll think it charmingly becoming—how fond he is of me!—'tis very delightful to be married!—he little dreams how I mean to surprise him—I have the picture quite ready; and it is the prettiest thing—

Enter JAMES, L.

Oh, Mr.—

James. James, madam, at your service. My wife will wait upon your ladyship whenever you are ready—I left her very busy in—

Lady E. [*Looking in the glass.*] Oh, very well, very well.

James. Your ladyship likes our county? we have beautiful prospects.

Lady E. Yes, I like the prospect very much.

James. We are not quite so gay as in London, though:—I was there, my lady, in 1801;—my dear late master and I—

Lady E. Who put my guitar there?

James. I, my lady.

Lady E. Bring it me. [*James fetches it.*] Lud! 'tis quite out of tune—[*Strums on it.*] What were you saying, Mr. Thing'em?

James. Why, my lady, I was saying, that in 1801—[*A string snaps; she betrays impatience.*]—it was the winter of that year, and very cold it was,—the day after we arrived, the most extraordinary thing happened—

[*Another string snaps.*]

Lady E. Good gracious!

James. I was standing at the corner of Pall Mall, when on a sudden I heard such a crash—[*A third string snaps, and Lady Elizabeth dashes the guitar on the ground.*]

Lady E. Deuce take the thing!

James. Mercy on me! what's that? Never trust me, but I thought it was the very crash I heard in 1801.

Lady E. You old twaddler! Why do you stand chattering there? Send your wife—

James. Here she comes, my lady.—Twaddler! my wife

was right ; women, after all, are the best judges. Set a thief to catch a thief. Old twaddler, indeed ! [*Exit, L.*]

Enter MRS. DAVIES, L.

Mrs. D. I humbly wait upon your ladyship.

Lady E. A good style of waiting woman, that!—There, good woman, take this key, and in the drawer of the dressing-table, you'll find a gold comb : you can tuck up my hair, I suppose ?

Mrs. D. [*Opening the drawer.*] To be sure I can, my lady ; I'll make you such a toupee as shall make my master stare : I hate your scald-heads, for my part, all dragged up at the roots. [*Returns the key to Lady E.*]

Lady E. Come, come, make haste ; I shan't be ready before Harry comes back. [*Mrs. D. drops the comb.*] Lord, how stupid you are. [*Mrs. D. tries to put up Lady E.'s hair.*]

Lady E. [*Taking the comb out of her hand.*] You can't do it at all ; give it to me : there, there, let it alone

Enter COLONEL FREELOVE at the top.

Col. So, so.

Lady E. You can dress me, I suppose ?

Mrs. D. I hope, my lady, after waiting upon my master's mother three-and-thirty years, I ought to know something of the matter. I used to make all her gowns ; and I think, when you see it, you'll say I have altered your ladyship's very much for the better.

Lady E. Not my crape dress ? you have not touched that, I hope ? bring it here, do, and let me see it. [*Mrs. D. fetches the box, which Lady E. opens with great impatience.*] My heavens ! what have you done ? what, in the name of all that's odious, do you call this ?

Mrs. D. A flounce, my lady, a flounce. My lady was married in just such another.

Lady E. [*Throwing the gown at her.*] You horrible creature, you have ruined my gown. What's become of the peach-blossom trimming ?

Mrs. D. I put that upon the turban, my lady.

Lady E. Grant me patience !—get out of the room, get out of my sight directly !

Mrs. D. [*Aside.*] This it is to do a good-natured thing ! But you may make what fright you please of yourself

henceforward ; I'll never meddle nor make, not I.

[*Exit, L.*

Lady E. What an unfortunate creature I am !—my pretty, my beautiful peach-blossom ! [*Opens the box containing the turban.*] Well, if ever I saw such a thing ! I could tear—[*Works herself up into a complete rage, pulls it all to pieces, and kicks the box round the Stage till she gets opposite the Colonel.*

Col. Bravo ! bravo !—I see myself, it is the very thing :—my happiness is complete.

Lady E. [*Rather disconcerted.*] What, have you been in the room all the while ?

Col. I have, and I can scarcely contain my joy. A guitar smashed,—a gown torn to tatters ;—why, it's exquisite ! Hear me, Bess :—in early youth, I evinced a most imperious and intractable disposition, which was foolishly indulged by my fond, but injudicious parents : it was not till I was about to solicit the hand of my dear Bess, that I seriously reflected upon this infirmity : what will she think of me ? (I used to repeat to myself ;) she will deem me a wretch not fit to live ; she will despise, she will abhor me.

Lady E. Ah, my love, never, never.

Col. The very apprehension drove me to distraction ; fifty times I was on the point of relinquishing all thoughts of marriage ; what right, said I, have I to entail misery on any human being ? why involve the creature I love, who is so mild and gentle, in broils and vexations ? No, I'll not marry. Then my affection would get the better of my resolution, and I determined, for your sake, to conquer this terrible vice. But judge how my mind is relieved by discovering that you, my love, suffer under the identical imperfection of temper which has so long tormented me. Now indeed we shall be happy.

Lady E. And you really are violent ?

Col. Outrageous.

Lady E. How extraordinary ! I never perceived it before marriage.

Col. No, no, I sought to make myself agreeable ; and 'tis evident, Bess, you had the same desire.

Lady E. I always thought you so gentle.

Col. So did I you:—I am, when I have my own way . but upon the slightest provocation—

Lady E. That's just like me. If I am contradicted, my heart begins to beat, and my ears go buz, buz ; and I get into such a rage :—but then it's over again in a minute.

Col. Ay, but it begins again in a minute.

Lady E. Just so ; that's for all the world like me. Dear, how well we shall do together.

Col. Oh, yes ! at times, to be sure, we shall play the very devil ; but then, how delightful will be our reconciliations !

Lady E. Reconciliations ! do you think you will ever be in a passion with me, Harry ?

Col. Oh, when the fit is on me, I know nobody ; I'm an absolute madman : but, the paroxysm over, I shall be at your feet, believe me.

Lady E. That will be delightful ! but pray be at my feet as seldom as possible.

Col. Well, Bess, get ready ; I expect five or six of our neighbours to dinner. Go, love, you know not from what a weight my heart is relieved by this confession.

[*Exit Lady Elizabeth, R.*

Enter LORD RIVERS, L.

Lord R. Well, how do you speed ?

Col. I think it will do : I have a little astonished her already, but nothing to what she shall be. Remember, I depend upon your assistance. [*Exit, L.*

Lord R. I have given you my promise.

Re-enter LADY ELIZABETH, R.

Lady E. Oh, Harry, I forgot to ask you—is he gone ?

Lord R. He quitted the room as you entered. But what's the matter ? still inconsolable for the loss of your waiting-woman ? or are the cares of matrimony dawning upon you already ?

Lady E. Heigh ho !

Lord R. Why, what are you so serious about ?

Lady E. I have but too much cause.

Lord R. Truly, marriage is a very serious concern, and that's the reason I never could be brought to think of it.

Lady E. [*Aside.*] Would I never had!—[*A violent crash is heard behind the scenes.*] What's that?

Lord R. What, in the name of confusion, can this mean? Is the house coming about our ears?

Lady E. Should it be Harry! [*Noise increases.*] For Heaven's sake, dear brother!

Lord R. Don't alarm yourself, Elizabeth; I'll step and learn the cause of all this. [*Exit, L.*]

Lady E. I tremble from head to foot. Oh, it is but too true, I fear:—he has not exaggerated the account of himself. Unhappy, wretched Elizabeth!

Re-enter LORD RIVERS, L.

Well?

Lord R. [*Affecting ill-humour.*] Well; it's a freak of your amiable husband's!

Lady E. What ails him?

Lord R. I wouldn't advise you to ask him. I found him with his eyes starting out of his head, breaking and kicking about the furniture.

Lady E. Not my beautiful Sévre, I hope?

Lord R. Everything he could lay his hands upon: I endeavoured to calm him, and he answered me in a tone that really—

Lady E. Nay, nay, never heed him:—he is a little violent.

Lord R. A little, do you call it?

Lady E. Well, well, he's very violent; but indeed he has not deceived me: he acknowledged it all to me.

Lord R. Never tell me of acknowledging. When a man is a madman, he ought not to marry; and so I shall tell him. [*Voices are heard behind the scenes as if in high words.*]

Col. [*Without.*] Scoundrels! to contradict me!—leave the house, every soul of you!

Lady E. Now, Rivers, brother, my dear brother!—everybody is so passionate in this house!—don't say a word; it won't last long; he told me it would not:—But, indeed, when he is in these rages, he knows nobody, not even me: so I'll run and lock myself up in my room. When it's all over, tell me:—but pray, pray, don't say a word. [*Exit, L.*]

Col. [*Behind.*] Rascals! [*Enters, L.*] the first that comes within my sight, I'll shoot through the head.

Lord R. Ha, ha, ha! you may spare your ammunition: for she has made her escape, more scared than a poor timid hare chased by a pack of hounds. Ha! ha! well, I give you joy.

Col. When I have accomplished my design, congratulate me, and not till then.

Lord R. I must approve your courage, however the event may turn out. The day after the wedding—

Col. Is precisely the only one which could have suited my purpose. A woman will submit to correction, while yet it comes from the hands of her lover: "but, the first ardour of passion once subsided, his admonitions are disregarded, or at best appear but as the austere precepts of pedantry or oppression."

Lord R. I cannot but admire your plan, and applaud your perseverance; though you'll excuse me if I am sceptic enough to doubt your execution: you may break a horse, you may even subdue a lion; but you'll never tame a woman.

Col. That remains to be proved.

[*Exit, L.*
Seats himself.]

Enter LADY ELIZABETH, R.

Lady E. [*Weeping.*] I wonder whether he is come round yet. Harry, Harry, is it all over?

Col. Over! yes, I have made a clear house of it. I have turned all the servants off, except James and his wife. By Jove, I wish you could see the eating-room; it's like a field of battle;—chairs here, tables there. Upon my soul, I can't help laughing!

Lady E. Ah! but you should not; it's very wrong. What are you doing?

Col. I'm finishing a little drawing for you.

Lady E. [*Leaning over his shoulder.*] Dear, how pretty!

[*Going, R.*]

Col. What, are you going? Stay a moment.

Lady E. No, I won't; you have been a very naughty child—you have destroyed all my beautiful china.

Col. Come, come; no reproaches, Bess: remember the guitar.

Lady E. Oh, that's quite different; that was not yours.

Col. True, and I'm sure I have no right to complain: for, in my time, I have smashed at least twenty fiddles, and as many flutes: had it not been for my impetuous disposition, I should have been a tolerable performer by this time; but the first difficult passage that occurs, away goes the instrument—smack goes the desk—to the devil kick the master!—Would to Heaven I had nothing more serious to reproach myself with!

Lady E. Why, what have you been guilty of?

Col. Do not ask me, my love; I cannot tell you.

Lady E. But you must; I desire you'll conceal nothing from me.

Col. Well, just let me finish this cascade.

Lady E. I don't care about the cascade; I do beg you'll tell me what you have done.

Col. What a painful task do you impose upon me.

[*Getting up.*

Lady E. I wish you would make haste:—how I do hate people to keep me in suspense.

Col. You have seen poor James, that worthy, faithful servant?

Lady E. Well?

Col. I had the misfortune, in a moment of rage, to break his arm.

Lady E. Break his arm! oh, shocking!—I'm very passionate myself, very; but I never went beyond breaking the china, or kicking about the furniture. I'll tell you what; a thought has struck me—you shall make me your model.

Col. You! ha! ha!

Lady E. Now what do you laugh at?—hear me, and I'll give you my picture.

Col. What, Bess? have your picture, and not give it me yesterday?

Lady E. I gave away the original; you would not have everything in one day. Always wear it near your heart; and whenever you feel any ungentle passions rising in your breast, look at it; 'twill check your anger, and tenderness will succeed; and soon my Harry will become the gentlest, as he is already the best of creatures.

Col. Where, where is this talisman, this preservative of happiness?

Lady E. It's in this drawer. Oh, dear, I don't know what I have done with the key. [*Looking about.*

Col. [*Aside.*] Giddy puss! [*Sits down.*

Lady E. Have you seen it anywhere, Harry?
[*Tossing up the things.*

Col. No.

Lady E. Why, you don't look ;—how you sit, Harry!

Col. Where, my love, should I look? you have lost it I suppose.

Lady E. How should I lose it? it is not half an hour since I had it here. Oh, I recollect, Mrs. Thingamy has it—Mrs. Davies, Mrs. Davies!—don't be impatient, my love. [*Rings violently.*] Mrs. Davies! [*Rings and breaks the bell-rope.*] Deuce take the thing! don't flurry yourself, Harry. Mrs. Davies! [*Stamps her feet and rings the hand-bell.*] Don't be in a hurry, Harry.

Col. I am not, my love.

Enter MRS. DAVIES, L.

Mrs. D. Did you call, my lady?

Lady E. To be sure: didn't you hear me?

Col. [*Aside.*] She must be confoundedly deaf, if she did not!

Lady E. I want my key.

Mrs. D. What key, my lady?

Lady E. Of that drawer.

Mrs. D. I gave it to you again, my lady.

Lady E. When?

Mrs. D. After I took out the comb.

Lady E. And you returned it to me?

Mrs. D. I did, indeed, my lady.

Lady E. This woman will be the death of me.

Mrs. D. You were sitting just where you are now; your ladyship may remember you were in a passion!

Lady E. I in a passion!—Worse and worse! this is beyond all patience! My dear love, did you ever hear such an accusation?—I in a passion!

Col. [*Aside.*] Now it's my turn.—James! James!

Enter JAMES, L.

Have you seen anything of Lady Elizabeth's key?

James. I don't recollect seeing anything of it.

Lady E. No, my love, it's Mrs. Davies's business.

Mrs. D. If your ladyship wore pockets, it would be nobody's business.

Lady E. Impertinence ! leave the house, and never let me see you again !

James. Really, my lady, for a paltry key—

Col. How dare you speak to Lady Elizabeth with such disrespect ?—Leave the house, and never more return to it—no reply : go, I insist upon it.

James. Oh, my poor master ! [*Exit with Mrs. D., L.*]

Col. [*Pacing across the Stage.*] An ungrateful herd !—

Lady E. So impertinent !

Col. Obstinate !—

Lady E. Story-tellers, too :—I declare, it's always servants who create quarrels and dissensions in families.

Col. Well, there are no more in the house, so perhaps now we shall have a little peace. It was silly enough, too, to be angry about such a trifle :—I told you we should find it very difficult to repress our natural dispositions.

Lady E. Come, let us think of something else :—let's have a little music.

Col. Well imagined :—“ Music hath charms to soothe a savage beast.”

Lady E. And I have a sweet air about domestic happiness—'twill just suit me. Will you accompany me ?

Col. With pleasure.

[*Takes his flute ; she brings the desk forward.*]

AIR.

When love attends the wedded pair,
Beneath their feet the flowers increase,
And o'er their path-way rises fair
The sunshine of domestic peace :
For love can bid the desert bloom,
And charm the raging storm to cease,
And clear from intervening gloom
The sunshine of domestic peace.

Col. You don't execute that last turn quite as it ought to be.

Lady E. Don't I ? Well, we'll begin again.

Col. Willingly.

AIR.

When love attends the wedded pair,
Beneath their feet the flowers increase ;—

Col. [*Interrupting her.*] Mind your time.

And o'er their path-way rises fair
The sunshine of domestic peace.

Col. Still you don't hit it quite.

Lady E. I beg your pardon: 'tis you who don't accompany me in time; you spoil the harmony.

Col. No, Bess, 'tis you who make the discord. Come let's try it once more.

Lady E. Again! Lord, how stupid!

Col. Yes; and take care of "domestic peace."

AIR.

When love attends the wedded pair;—

Lady E. Do take your hand away; you interrupt me by beating time:

Beneath their feet the flowers increase;—

Col. You are getting too ~~fast~~.

And o'er their path-way rises fair,
The sunshine of domestic peace:
For love can bid the desert bloom,
And charm the raging storm to cease,
And clear from intervening gloom
The sunshine of domestic peace.

Col. That won't do at all.

Lady E. [*Throwing up the music.*] Then sing it yourself.

Col. A pretty model! a good example you set me!

Lady E. Humph! you know I promised not to be in a passion without reason; but really—[*Swinging her handkerchief, to the end of which is attached the key.*]

Col. What's that dangling at the end of your handkerchief?

Lady E. Oh, my dear Harry, it's—

Col. The key, which you accused that poor woman of having lost?

Lady E. It is.

Col. And how can you answer this to yourself, madam? What amends can you make these poor people, for your harsh treatment of them?

Lady E. Dear love, I will ask their pardon.

Col. And shall I, too, solicit forgiveness of James? 'twill be becoming in me, don't you think so?

Lady E. No; but I'll tell you how we may atone:—I'll speak to James, whom you sent away, and do you make my peace with his wife: thus shall we mutually repair the wrongs we have mutually committed.

Col. [*Aside.*] Now could I take her to my arms: but that must not be yet.—[*Aloud.*] When I reflect that I have been worked upon to betray myself into passion, it puts me into such a rage—This it is to be married! Damnation!

[*Throws himself upon the sofa.*]

Lady E. [*Going up to him.*] Pray, love, don't be angry, pray, now: Harry, won't you speak to me? won't you?
[*He pushes her from him; she bursts into tears, and goes to a chair at the farthest extremity of the Stage.*]

Enter LORD RIVERS, L.

Lord R. Well, good people, what time do we dine to-day? Hey-day! you sit at such a well-bred distance from each other, one would swear you had been married four-and-twenty years, instead of four-and-twenty hours! Elizabeth in tears! what is the meaning of all this? Colonel Freelove, is this the fate you have prepared for my beloved sister?

[*Goes up to her.*]

Col. My lord, I am in my own house.

Lady E. Oh, heavens!

Lord R. I blush for you! is this a day—

Col. I receive admonition from no man.

Lord R. So much the worse; a little would do you no injury.

Col. You are insulting, sir.

Lady E. Rivers, remember he is my husband. Henry consider he is my brother.

Lord R. Leave us to ourselves, Elizabeth.

Col. [*Whispering to him.*] Let us affect to quarrel.—
You understand me, sir?

Lord R. Whenever you please, sir.

Lady E. What mean these words?

Col. Nothing, nothing; compose yourself, I entreat.—
My lord, you will waive all further explanation before my wife. [*Pretending to speak in an under tone.*] I shall take an opportunity of leaving the room immediately: follow me.

Lord R. You may expect me. [*Exit Colonel, L.*]

Lady E. Oh, Heaven! he is gone! Do you think you can deceive me? I know your fatal purpose:—Rivers, you shall not leave me.

Lord R. Lady Elizabeth, do not detain me.

Lady E. At your feet I throw myself:—if you leave me, I shall expire;—if you seek revenge, on me, on me let it fall. He is my husband; oh! then spare the life on which my every hope, my very existence depends.

Lord R. Rise, Lady Elizabeth.

Lady E. Never, till you have sworn this affair shall terminate here.

Lord R. Well, then, I promise you it shall.

Lady E. [*Rising,*] Oh, blessings, blessings on—

Enter GROOM with a letter, L.

Groom. Colonel Freelove, my lord, desired me to deliver this letter in private to you. [*Exit, L.*]

Lord R. Blockhead, begone! [*Reads.*] Ah!—

Lady E. What letter is that? I see by your looks, 'tis from Harry. What are its contents! You are silent; let me see it.

Lord R. Unfortunate Freelove!

Lady E. Gracious powers! What has he done?

Lord R. I would not afflict you, my poor Elizabeth.

Lady E. You torture me with suspense; I will know the worst—[*Snatches the letter and reads.*] “*Stung with remorse, overwhelmed with shame, how can I ever venture to appear before you? I am awakened to a full sense of my fatal disorder:—why did I offer your sister a hand so unworthy her exalted qualities? Reparation is due to her: the only one still in my power, is solemnly to engage never again to molest her. I cannot bear to make her wretched; and therefore will forever leave her. The painful task of bidding her an eternal adieu, would be too much for me; but to your friendship I commit the charge of—*” Oh, Rivers, fly! seek him, bring him to me! he cannot be far off. Take your fleetest horse and overtake him:—tell him I will bear all his faults with patience: stay not to reply; bring him to my arms, or never, never see me more. [*Exit Lord Rivers, L.*]

Enter JAMES and MRS. DAVIES, L., with carpet-bag, bird-cage, and other moveables.

James. We are come, madam, to pay our humble duty before we quit this house forever.

Mrs. D. Ah, my lady, I was born in this house, and I did hope to have died in it: had my dear mistress lived, we should not have had to seek new friends.

Lady E. Nor shall you;—I will be your friend: forgive the injustice I did you. James, you cannot, surely, ever leave your master?

James. He discharged me, my lady: I would have parted with my life to have served him.

Lady E. And have you lived so long with him, and yet not learned to make allowances for his infirmities?—he is violent, to be sure—

James. He, madam! somebody has deceived you, wickedly deceived you; till this day, he was an angel upon earth,—kind, gentle, affable, and affectionate! Oh, matrimony has strangely altered him.

Lady E. Everything I hear—

James. Never till to-day did he use a harsh word to me: had I committed a fault, he would reprove me in a tone so gentle, a manner so kind—

Lady E. Except when he broke your arm.

James. He strike a servant! Never, never! Some terrible evil spirit has taken possession of the house since your ladyship's arrival here.

Lady E. A new light breaks in upon me; I see it all: leave me, my friends, for the present: but by all the love you bear your master, do not quit the house!—You do not wish to afflict him?

Mrs. D. Heaven is our witness we do not.

Lady E. Remain, then, and he shall be restored to you in all his former kindness and affection. [*Exeunt James and Mrs. Davies. As they go off, COLONEL FREELOVE and LORD RIVERS enter at the top.*] Mild, gentle, affable, and affectionate! then he has assumed this part, only to give me a more perfect reflection of myself. He leaves me, that he may not render me wretched: 'tis plain he thinks I shall make him so. This letter—his departure, are but feigned; but soon, too soon, they might have proved fatal

realities ! How shall I ever look up again ? Where, where shall I pour my repentant tears ?

Col. Into my bosom, Elizabeth ; into the bosom of the man you have now rendered the happiest of mortals. [*Embracing her.*] Now, Rivers, you may congratulate me. I told you my plan would succeed.

Lady E. Oh, Rivers ! And were you, too, in a plot against me ?

Lord R. I was ; and, seeing that women may sometimes be converted into reasonable creatures, I shall perhaps change my mind, and some day or other take unto myself a wife.

Lady E. Harry, I will change characters with you : I will, by your example, become mild and forbearing ; but I will go beyond you : you imitated me but for an instant ; I will study to resemble you all my life.

Col. 'Tis not an easy task to reform our characters suddenly. I expect to find you now and then relapsing into your former error ; but you have experienced the evil effects of it ; and reflection cannot fail to convince you, that affection and gentleness are the brightest ornaments of your sex, and the surest source of domestic felicity.

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